

## **ASPECTS OF MUSIC INTEGRATION IN THE DIDACTIC OF OTHER DISCIPLINES**

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The roots of integration can be traced to the ideals of progressive education at the beginning of the twentieth century. The emphasis of progressive educators on the child-centered curriculum and holistic learning promoted the idea of integration between curricular subjects. The notion of integration was revived in the 1960s and 1970s, when concern about students' achievement yielded to concern for students' experiences. Instead of regarding curriculum as a rigidly defined, given entity, educators focused attention on its meanings to students.

Scholarly literature emphasizes the cognitive aspects of integration with some reference to affective aspects. The following terms depict some of the ways that the term integration is used in educational circles:

- Infusion- integrating a particular subject across the curriculum;
- Topics-within-disciplines- integrating multiple strands of the same discipline within the instructional setting;
- Interdisciplinary- maintaining traditional subject boundaries while aligning content and concepts from one discipline with those of another;
- Thematic approaches- subordinating subject matter to a theme, allowing the boundaries between disciplines to blur;
- Holistic approaches- addressing the needs of the whole child, including cognitive, physical, moral, affective, and spiritual dimensions
- Multidisciplinary- looking at a situation as it was portrayed in different disciplines;
- Interdisciplinary- considering a problem in terms of different disciplines and then synthesizing these perspectives in coming up with a more general account;
- Meta-disciplinary- comparing the practices within a particular discipline;
- Trans-disciplinary- examining a concept as it appears in political and in physical discourse [6].

The overarching theme of the framework across subject areas was having pupils become critical and creative thinkers by making connections between subject areas [16]. Definitions of integrated curriculum vary from author to author, and over the decades, have gradually moved toward a more student-centered interpretation. During the 1950's and 60s integrated curriculum tended to emphasize planning and structure in order to "provide the learners with a unified view of commonly held knowledge, as well as to motivate and develop learners' power to perceive new relationships and thus to create new models, systems, and structures" [18]. Over time, however,

structured approaches to integration gradually gave way to more flexible, student-centered approaches “in which children broadly explore knowledge in various subjects related to certain aspects of their environment” [4]. This approach was intended to bridge “subject-matter lines, bringing together various aspects of the curriculum into meaningful association to focus upon broad areas of study. It views learning and teaching in a holistic way and reflects the real world, which is interactive” [9].

Bresler [7] identified four integration styles that exist “in the operational, day-to-day curriculum in ordinary schools, each with its own set of goals, contents, pedagogies, and roles within the school: *subservient integration, co-equal integration, affective integration, and social integration*”. *The subservient style* places arts in service to other academic subjects, such as using the song Fifty Nifty United States to help children memorize the names of the 50 states. *The co-equal style* integrates arts as an equal partner with other subjects. This integrative style requires discipline-specific knowledge, for example, including the study of composers, the stylistic periods in which they worked, and their musical compositions within a social studies lesson to place social events within a historical context. *The affective style* involves two functional uses of arts—as a means to change moods, such as using music to help children relax; or as a creative outlet for students, such as playing recorded music as a stimulus for improvised student dance. *The social integration style* is similar to the affective style in that both complement the academic curriculum. In social integration, however, arts support the social functions of schooling such as scheduling student performances to provide entertainment and to increase attendance at parent–teacher Association meetings“ [4].

In another research of Snyder [19] three levels of integration are described. Similar to Bresler’s [8] subservient integration, connection is a superficial, one-way level of integration in which materials or concepts from one discipline are used to help teach or reinforce a concept in another curricular area. Correlations relate two or more disciplines through shared materials or topics, such as a lesson using time signatures (music) in the study of fractions (mathematics). However, true integration is achieved when the integrity of each discipline is maintained [18]. “Integration is a two-way process (similar to Bresler’s co-equal integration) in which application and synthesis of ideas from one discipline to another are encouraged, leading to deeper understanding and fostering critical thinking (e.g., exploring how form is achieved through variation and repetition in poetry, music, and architecture)” [4].

The *arts* and artistic ways of thinking assumed a more legitimate, even desirable status. This climate of innovation and experimentation with new educational goals, contents, and pedagogies promoted a fusion between arts and academic subjects [7], [8]. Advocates for integrating the arts with academic disciplines reflect a variety of

perspectives, interests, and goals. Arts educators typically seek to establish, through integration, a more solid role for arts within the academic curriculum. They envision arts specialists who collaborate with classroom teachers and, in the process, strengthen the links between the marginalized specialists and the institutions. Principals' vision of integration typically involves classroom teachers teaching arts as part of the academic curriculum. They tend to value integration as a way both to use school time efficiently and to save money and resources. Classroom teachers often express ambivalence toward the issue of integration: they see the demand that they include arts as one more mandated curriculum topic imposed upon them with little or no support. At the same time, many teachers are concerned about providing gleaming opportunities that will allow the less academically oriented students to draw on their unique strengths and talents [7].

Arts provide an excellent example of the interdependence and interrelatedness of cognition and affect-emotion. Different forms of representation (e.g. visual, kinesthetic, auditory) develop our ability to interact with and comprehend the world around us and draw multiple meanings out of it. If we expand these forms beyond the verbal and the numerical, our perception of the world is immensely enriched [9].

Music is an expressive and communication tool that accompanies the development of the human society since its inception. Today, media-rich society, music has an important socio-cultural and psychological role. The music works first and foremost on the emotional dimension. This is its particular power as a tool for personal expression on the one hand, and as an ingredient in social cohesion on the other (for example, religious and secular ceremonies, folk singing). "Music is one of the richest areas in terms of the intellect. While it meets the need to give aesthetic expression to emotions, music activates a complex system of cognitive skills" [11]. These skills are expressed within three fields:

- A. In Music as a field in itself.
- B. In areas with a partial overlap (language, movement and math)
- C. In the socio-cultural field (as a means to express social moods and preservation of traditions, customs and values) [12].

Rational society, where "important things" are measured on outputs and are based on logical analysis of cause-and-effect relationships, there is a tendency to push aside the music and other "areas of artistic emotion. Preference of the ratio over emotion can bring educational decision-makers to a conclusion, that music is just in order to make the curriculum beautiful. They assume that when the system will have extra money it will be able to devote resources to this area. This concept is fundamentally wrong. The music is intellectual-cognitive, allowing us to examine the complexity of our emotional world in a sophisticated way, using very abstract symbols. It is a built-in and independent domain that allows to operate intuitively

without acquired formal knowledge. People are able to express themselves in sounds, response to sounds, and enjoy them, even if they are not taught music. Music is considered as a discipline in the curriculum based on three aspects: cognitive-psychological aspect, the social aspect and the creative aspect [11].

**Cognitive-psychological aspect:** because music is focused on the emotional field, it could serve as a reflective tool to examine the feelings and emotions in the input side and expression of emotions in the output side. Music is a form of thinking, and as a tool for expressing thoughts [12]. In the input aspect- during listening to music, attention is given not only to music itself but also to the emotion it arouses in each and every one. A talk about musical composition is a tool for examining the impact on its listeners, the way it affects them and the reason? (The product of such reference is openness to various emotions among the listeners-students) [13]. In the output aspect- this means that children will be given the opportunity to explore their feelings and express them through the musical tools available to them- using their voice- the immediate melodic expression tools, using their bodies- the immediate rhythmic expression, using percussion and melodic instruments.

**The social aspect:** the music has emerged at the dawn of human history as a tool of expression and communication, and as a means of expressing social moods. Even today, despite the fact that it is an individual expression tool, music has played an important role as a tool for social expression and as a means of social cohesion. In Israeli society it is especially prominent in religious and secular ceremonies, on holidays and during national memory, and youth mass events of rock and pop music [11].

Classical music, whose fans are relatively small, was also used throughout history as a complex expression of desires and social ideals. This is a clear example of Italian Renaissance music, carrying the flag of liberation from the bonds of religion and represented the idea of personal expression. The social-musical activity around classic artistic music, whether in singing choir or playing together, is used for some children a source of satisfaction and enjoyment, while other children show resistance to this type of activity. We think that this musical activity should be based on personal preference [10].

Typically, responses to artistic music need an emotional and intellectual effort. To help the young child recognize the attributes of this music and the possible contribution to personal growth, it is necessary to find the music that speaks to them. Do not expect that the taste of all people would be the same. Therefore, the role of teacher is to enable children to feel the taste of different pieces, allowing them to express excitement or their reservations. A byproduct of such reference is in

providing legitimacy to personal tastes and preferences, which is the basis for the development of aesthetic judgment.

**The creative aspect:** Music is a tool for expressing emotions. The Music activity is based on thinking about sounds. This thinking is based simultaneously on the universal emotional experience, common to all mankind, and the human ability to create a wide variety of emotional expressions-sound culture, context and style. Studies indicate that members of different cultures understand the emotional significance of foreign music, and children who lack musical education are able to set different musical utterances in emotional terms [13].

“Curricular integration has become an increasingly important component of many school reform initiatives, particularly at the elementary school level. Certainly, the notion of using a cross-disciplinary approach to achieve various educational goals has been around since antiquity, at least informally” [5]. However, during the past 20 years, this approach has attracted heightened attention through the work of such scholars as the psychologist H. Gardner [14] whose theory of multiple intelligences prompted increased popular and academic interest in the possible benefits of an interdisciplinary curriculum by expanding the definition of human intelligence beyond the traditional emphasis on reading, writing, and mathematics, to include a variety of intellectual competencies.

Linguistic intelligence, musical intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, and personal intelligences. Gardner [14] uses computer programming as one example of a practical application of his theory: “The shift toward a global culture and the “information explosion” from technological developments such as the Internet can make the task of educating the next generation appear overwhelming. This sense of frustration is only exacerbated by the realization that much of the specific technical material in today’s curriculum may well be obsolete within the next decade [4]. It seems, then, that the mission of teachers must go beyond merely conveying information. Teachers must equip students with the ability to reason, to think “outside the box” and to transfer what they are learning today to the vastly different circumstances that they will surely face when they are adults. Certainly, music has much to offer in terms of fostering creativity and critical thinking skills.

One of the many examples of non-arts outcome research is Aschbacher’s [2] study comparing schools using an interdisciplinary, thematic, team-based approach to high school humanities with other schools that used a more traditional approach. Results revealed statistically significant gains in writing and content knowledge, with largest gains in conceptual understanding for students in the integrated program. In contrast, students in the traditional programs made no gains in conceptual

understanding. This research also indicated that students in the integrated program stayed in school longer, worked harder (according to self-report and objective measures), and liked school better [ibidem].

A more recent example is a longitudinal 3-year study of “Learning through the Arts” (LTTA), a Canadian school wide arts education approach. This study of more than 6,000 students and their parents, teachers, and principals revealed that “6th grade LTTA students scored significantly higher on tests of computation than students in control schools”. Research also links integrated curriculum to improved student attitudes, attendance, motivation, work habits, and achievement test scores [1], [4], [15]. Students are not the only ones who seem to thrive in schools with an arts-integrated curriculum. Research also indicates that elementary teachers and secondary teachers [3], [17] are empowered by new teaching techniques and by the more positive and collaborative school environment associated with integrated curriculum” [5].

In conclusion we emphasize that music is where the heart and the mind, body and soul are in dialogue, and metaphorically-music is a duo for cognition and emotions. The essential ingredient in musical activity is the ability to listen.

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